

**Rombo Mountain Fire  
Bitterroot National Forest  
News Release**

Northern Rockies  
Incident Management  
Team  
Larry Svalberg  
Incident Commander

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Fire Information  
408-821-0082**

**Date: August 20, 2007 8 a.m.**

**Rombo Mountain Fire Grows to 18,000 Acres**

**West Fork, Mont. –** The Red Flag event experienced Sunday afternoon including strong, gusty winds and low relative humidity resulted in rapid fire spread to the north and east with crown fire runs, multiple smoke columns and prolific spotting. Spot fires were discovered in the Laird Creek and Warm Springs Creek drainages. These same strong winds and smoke grounded aerial support and obscured the visibility of lookouts. As a result a clear picture of the current fire perimeter was not available Sunday evening and will be determined this morning. The fire was caused by lightning on July 31 and is located 16 miles south of Conner, MT and 4 miles northeast of Painted Rocks Lake.

A Stage I Pre-Evacuation Notice was issued late Sunday afternoon by the Ravalli County Sheriff for persons residing west of Highway 93 between Conner and Warm Springs Creek. All other existing Stage I Pre-Evacuation Notices and Stage II Evacuation Orders remain in effect. Structure protection actions are continuing in areas of concern along West Fork Road from just south of Trapper Creek Job Corps Center south to Lavene Creek and along Highway 93 south of the Sula Ranger Station to the Lost Trail Ski Resort off Highway 93. Fire growth will be monitored and additional evacuations and/or closures implemented, if needed.

The existing closure order remains in effect. Maps and area closure descriptions are available at Forest offices, and on line at [www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot). The Forest is under Stage 2 fire restrictions which prohibit campfires and smoking other than in a vehicle, building or cleared area due to the high fire danger.

Though there are a number of active fires with necessary closures, most of the Bitterroot National Forest is still open for hiking and fishing. Contact your nearest Ranger District Office or the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office for current recreation activity opportunities.

A total of 219 personnel are assigned to the fire and additional firefighting crews, helicopters, and equipment to provide support have been requested, but may not be available due to the large number of fires burning in Montana and other states at this time.

Public and firefighter safety are the highest priority that Svalberg's incident management team, in coordination with the local forest personnel, take into consideration when planning and implementing fire management actions.

Larry Svalberg's Incident Management Team will be transitioning with the Southern Area Type I Incident Management Team today. Transfer of command will occur Tuesday morning.

### **Special Notice**

**There will be a Public Meeting Monday, August 20, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sula Clubhouse located about one mile east on East Fork Road. Larry Svalberg's Incident Management Team will give a briefing on the fires and be available for questions.**

**Also on hand to answer questions will be representatives from the Bitterroot National Forest, the Ravalli County Commissioners, and the Ravalli County Sheriff's Department.**

**In addition, Quesinberry's Type I Incident Management Team, which will be assuming command of the Rombo Mountain, Rat Creek, and Pattengail Fires, and Perkins' Fire Use Management Team, which will be assuming command of the Bitterroot Wildland Fire Use Complex will be introduced.**

**For additional information call Rombo Mountain Fire information at 821-0082 or visit the website, [www.inciweb.org](http://www.inciweb.org).**

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